

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 1-28, 30, 31, 65-79, and 81-101 are pending. Claims 19, 66 - 68, and 71 are amended. Claims 100 and 101 are new. Claims 20-24, 69, and 70 are cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 1-18, 28, 30, 31, 65, 79, 81-85, 87-89, and 96-98 have been allowed. Claims 24, 27, 70-78, 86, 91, and 94 have been objected to. The rejected independent claims have been amended to incorporate allowable subject matter from the objected claims identified by the Examiner, as described below. The new claims are also based on allowable claims. It is respectfully submitted that the application is therefore in condition for allowance. Entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

II. Claim Rejections

A. U.S. Patent No. 5,432,499A ("Ferut")

Claims 19-23, 25, 26, 66, 67, and 95-99 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,432,499A ("Ferut").

Independent claim 19 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 24, 23, 22, 21, and 20. Claim 66, which is dependent upon claim 19, has been amended to be consistent with claim 19. Claim 67 has been amended to be dependent on claim 66.

The Examiner objected to claim 24 but found that claim 24 would be allowable in combination with claims 19-23. Amended claim 19 and the claims dependent upon it are not, therefore, anticipated by Ferut.

Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

B. Hinks

Claims 68, 69, 90, 92, and 93 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,492,815 B2 ("Hinks").

Independent claim 68 is amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 70 and 69. Claim 71, which was dependent on claim 70, is amended to be dependent on claim 68. The Examiner found that claim 70 would be allowable in combination with claims 69 and 68. Amended claim 68 and the claims dependent upon it are not, therefore, be anticipated by Hinks.

Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

III. New Claims

New independent claim 100 is based on claim 68 and claim 91. The Examiner found the combination of claim 91 and claim 68 to be allowable. New claim 100 is therefore, allowable.

New independent claim 101 is based on claim 68, 94, and 93. The Examiner found the combination of claims 94, 93, and 68 to be allowable. New claim 101 is, therefore, allowable.

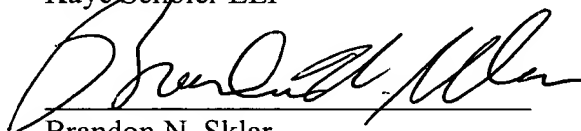
Entry and allowance of new claims 100 and 101 are respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

Allowance of the application in light of these Amendments and Remarks is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted
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